

COMMENT FORM

Public Scoping Meetings

We need your input. Please take a few minutes to provide your comments or questions for the USDA RUS Federal Environmental Impact Statement process and return your completed form today or mail by June 29, 2009. Your comments help in the planning and implementation of the project. **Thank you.**

Completing this form will automatically add you to our mailing list. If you prefer to not be on the mailing list, please check the box below.

☐ I do not wish to be on the project mailing list

Which meeting did you attend? 10/16/09 Plainview School, Plainview, MN

Please check the following issues that are important to you for transmission line siting.

- ☒ Project Purpose and Need
- ☒ Visual / Aesthetic resources
- ☒ Proximity to residences
- ☒ Land use (agriculture, residential, recreation)
- ☐ Water resources (floodplains, river crossings)
- ☒ Biological resources (wildlife habitat, raptors)
- ☒ Historic and cultural sites
- ☐ Radio or television interference
- ☐ Noise
- ☒ Health and safety
- ☐ Other: _____

What additional key issues should be addressed when assessing the potential impacts of this project?

existing
- These lines should have to follow right-of-ways versus cutting unfairly through farms, land in farmington township, section 3 of map we propose route options B19, B1A, B1B instead of B112-1389.
* - Health issues need much more attention in this matter. I work in healthcare at Mayo Clinic and have researched the impact of power lines and health risks both myself and with leading physicians in family medicine, pediatrics, and neurology. While existing research has not proven direct links to health risks, it has found increased likelihood of health risks associated with living near power lines. This is increased
Hampton • Rochester • La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project
in children. Also - it is very important to note that existing research is not current and

I-188-002

I-188-003

(continued) it is based on much lower voltage power lines than those proposed by this project—thus it amounts to comparing apples to oranges. Also, there is no research existing that assesses the health risks of 161 and 345 kV transmission lines over any significant time span to accurately research longer term risks of living near these lines—there are not longitudinal studies. We have 3 children under the age of 5 years old and are especially concerned about the health risks of raising our children so close to such high voltage lines. If you own property in one of the proposed corridors, please indicate all the existing uses of your property below:

☒ Agriculture crop/livestock ☒ Residential ☐ Conservation Easement
☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Other: _____

A Please describe any special uses or circumstances on your property that should be considered when assessing the Project. Please indicate the location of your property.

Property Address: 9525 40th Ave NE, Elgin, MN 55932

A ① We have 3 children under the age of 5 years old and are gravely concerned about health threats to our children if forced to have such high voltage lines in close proximity to our home and their grandparents' homestead where they attend daycare and spend large amounts of time. (Eldon Brenda Malwitz Farm - 1892 40th Ave NE, Elgin, MN 55932) Research existing in health risks + high voltage lines is not current or fairly comparable to the 161/345 kV lines proposed. There are not many other equally children in farmington township, largely due to zoning ordinance requiring 80 acres for a homestead—thus most neighbors are disinclined to sell.

B In your opinion, what are the most sensitive resources (biological, cultural, recreational, etc.) in the Project area and why?
 The proposed B159-B160 line is within 0.5 mile of our home and cuts my parents' farm in half. For the children's health and many other concerns, there are other routes that should be considered.

A ② Land Use - We live in the country to escape environmental hazards of city living as well as to use the land for recreational, livestock + other purposes. My parents' farm (our neighbor) [Malwitz farm - address noted above] is a place us + our 3 young kids spend much time outdoors including in the fields, helping farm. The Malwitz's are dairy and crop farmers which means they access their land much more often during the year (20+ times at minimum) compared to non-dairy farms who only have to access 3x/year. We propose route options B159 + B160 as less impacting routes that affect less homes, no children, do not cross dairy farmer land, and are more direct routes.

A ③ Historical - We live in a renovated one-room school house. This home has much historical significance and value. To run high voltage power lines within 0.5 miles of our home would affect this longevity.

A ④ Wildlife habitat - There is much wildlife in our area that I am concerned would be negatively impacted by this project.

I-188-001

I-188-004

I-188-005

I-188-001

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

I-188-002

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

I-188-003

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and livestock health and safety will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

I-188-004

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to historic and archaeological resources as well as socioeconomic issues such as

I-188-006

Question B: What are most sensitive resources? Health, safety to individuals living in close proximity, especially children. EMF threats. Destroying farmland (land affected as they use it multiple times each year). Wildlife habitat. Decreased land value. Negative aesthetic impacts. Impact on crops. ^{University}
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I-188-007

In your opinion, was the project description, purpose, and need for the project adequately explained? If not, what additional information is needed?

NO - I question the need for this project versus the goal of monetary gains of those behind it. Rochester MN is close by and has adequate power supply for us. Our land, health is being unfairly targeted as a "cross-way".

I-188-008

Also - I do not feel there is adequate research regarding health risks to those living within close proximity to these lines. There is not current research on the 161-345 kV lines, and certainly not time-based studies to adequately examine the long-term health risks. My concern is especially for raising children under these lines. I have done research myself and have had physicians also research for me - there are increased health risks especially for children with smaller voltage lines so I do not want to take a risk or be a "guinea pig" for the higher voltage lines.

Please tell us how to reach you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Sara Walch

Representing (Optional): _____

Mailing Address: 9525 40th Ave NE

City: Elgin

State: MN

Zip Code: 55932

Daytime Phone (Optional): 507-288-3310

Public participation for the Federal, Minnesota, and Wisconsin permitting processes will be ongoing for the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project. If you sign up for the mailing list, you will be notified when opportunities to participate are being planned.

Please plan to continue your involvement in the process and provide your comments. We appreciate your input.

property values will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

I-188-005

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to wildlife will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

I-188-006

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to the aesthetic quality of the areas surrounding the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

I-188-007

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will describe, in detail, project purpose and need. The justification document which has been accepted by the RUS is the Alternative Evaluation study which is available at:
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

I-188-008

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and livestock health and safety will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.